

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 02809 031200Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-02 PRS-01 INR-07 /020 W

-----045173 031205Z /53

R 021100Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO USIA WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2021

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 2809

USIAC

E.O. 11652:

SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO VANCE SPEECH ON ASIA

REF: USIA 17704

1. WE MADE VERY WIDE DISTRIBUTION OF FULL TEXT. IN ADDITION AMBASSADR AND OTHER EMBASSY OFFICERS SENT COPIES UNDER PERSONAL LETTER TO MANY GOS OFFICIAL FROM PRIME MINISTER ON DOWN.
2. ALL PAPERS, RADIO, AND TV NEWS GAVE GOOD COVERAGE TO SPEECH. NEW NATION CARRIED ONE FULL PAGE OF EXCERPTS.
3. TWO EDITORIALS SO FAR. NEW NATION JULY 1 SAID SPEECH "PUTS GENERALIZED PRONOUNCEMENTS AND SEEMINGLY SCATTERED ACTION BY US IN REGION OVER PAST FEW MONTHS INTO BROAD PERSPECTIVE. WHAT EMERGES FROM OVERALL PICTURE IS MORE DETACHED US ROLE, BUT APPARENTLY NOT ONE BORN OF GREATER INDIFFERENCE OR WORSE, MISTAKEN PERCEPTIONS... MR. VANCE IS CONVINCING WHEN HE SAID US HAS RECOVERED ITS SELF-CONFIDENCE AT HOME AND HAS NOT ABANDONED ITS INTERESTS IN ASIA." EDITORIAL GHEN GOES ON TO REVIEW CONTENT

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OF VANCE SPEECH, NOTING THAT ALTHOUGH SERIOUS PROBLEMS EXIST, VANCE "SPOKE WITH OBVIOUS OPTIMISM." EDITORIAL CONCLUDES: "TAKEN AT FACE VALUE, THERE IS REASSURING EFFECT IN MR. VANCE'S PERCEPTIONS OF ASIAN SECURITY, TRADE, AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS. TEST WILL COME AS US TRANSLATES ITS POLICY AIMS INTO REALITY."

4. STRAITS TIMES JULY 2 CALLS VANCE SPEECH "IMPORTANT AND WIDE-

RANGING" ONE WHICH "CAN BE INTERPRETED AS BEING DESIGNED TO REASURE OLD FRIENDS AND COUNSEL FORMER ENEMIES OF CONTINUING AMERICAN INTERESTS IN REGION." EDITORIAL SAYS VANCE'S MAIN THEMES REITERATE BASIC US POSITIONS ON NUMBER OF CRITICAL ISSUES AND ARE "UNDERLINED BY PRESIDENT CARTER'S CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS." STRAITS TIMES SEES SPEECH AS CLEARLY SHOWING THAT "WASHINGTON WILL CONCENTRATE ON NORMALISING RELATIONS WITH CHINA AND AT SAME TIME PRESERVING US-JAPANESE ALLIANCE AS CORNERSTONE OF EAST ASIA SECURITY." PAPER OBSERVES THAT VANCE "AVOIDS PUSHING INTO NEW AREAS OF COMMITMENT" AND HOPES TO "IMPROVE PRESENT RELATIONSHIPS...WITH ASIAN COUNTRIES WITHOUT BEING PREPARED TO EMBARK ON ANY RADICAL CHANGE." EDITORIAL THEN REVIEWS ISSUES IN US RELATIONS WITH PRC, TAIWAN, AND SOUTH KOREA, EXPRESSING HOPE THAT ACCELERATED AMERICAN PULLOUT FROM SOUTH KOREA WILL NOT OCCUR AND OBSERVING THAT "HOW WASHINGTON IS GOING TO KEEP ITS PLEDGE TO DEFEND SOUTH KOREA, PARTICULARLY WHEN A CRISIS COMES UP, AS IT CARRIES ON ITS TROOPS RUNDOWN, IS ONE OF ENIGMAS OF CARTER STRATEGY." TURNING TO "TWO PARTS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA (WHICH) ARE CRUCIAL FOR US: VIETNAM AND ASEAN, STRAITS TIMES SAYS VANCE IS UNDERSTANDABLY CAUTIOUS TOWARD VIETNAM AND "MORE OPTIMISTIC OVER ASEAN, WELCOMING FIRST US-ASEAN CONSULTATIONS TO BE HELD IN MANILA AND HOPING FOR STRONGER AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR ASEAN AS RESULT OF THESE TALKS." VANCE ALSO RECOGNIZES USEFUL ECONOMIC TIES BETWEEN US AND ASEAN. "MR. VANCE HAS, HOWEVER," PAPER SAYS, "FURTHER RAISED PROBLEM OF INDOCHINESE UNCLASSIFIED

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REFUGEES AND HAS REBUKED CERTAIN UNSPECIFIED NATIONS FOR TURNING THEIR BACKS ON THESE UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE." FINALLY, EDITORIAL NOTES THAT "NOTWITHSTANDING CULTURAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL DIFFERENCE, ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS EMPHASIZED. IMPLICITLY, THOSE WITH BETTER RECORD IN THESE MATTERS WILL RECEIVED MORE FAVORABLE TREATMENT." STRYKER

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
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